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ABSTRACT

This newsletter presents excerpts from articles appearing in European journals; some articles are printed in French, although the majority appear in English. The first part of the newsletter, devoted to issues of common concern to European nations, includes a discussion of results of a survey in which students described their ideas of Europe in the year 2000, and a report of a project concerning long-term forecasting. In the second part of the newsletter, reports of educational developments in eleven nation members of the Council of Europe are presented. Topics discussed in English include changes in higher education programs in Denmark, West Germany, Portugal, and the United Kingdom. Education of special groups in West Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, and the United Kingdom is described. An article from West Germany concerns educational finance, and articles from Sweden deal with working conditions in the schools, foreign language programs, and educational broadcasting. (SD)

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Strasbourg

THE GLOOMY GENERATION

The Times Educational Supplement, in conjunction with the British National Committee for Cultural Co-operation in Europe, which represents the European Cultural Foundation in Britain, asked children up to the age of 18 to write up their idea of Europe in the year 2000. The results give the overall impression that this must be the gloomiest generation since that of AD 975, when everyone believed that Armageddon would come at the millennium. Children of today may have cause for gloom too, and even for believing in Armageddon in the shape of nuclear war.

It was interesting to note that the competitors spent much more time on problems - pollution, crime, housing, inflation - than on discussing possible measures to improve things. One thing that became clear, on reading the whole batch of entries, was the effect of television, which provides so much sophisticated information for even the youngest children, and so little help in putting it into perspective. It was significant that children were much better informed about possible ways of dealing with technological difficulties, like pollution, than with political ones, like inflation and economic recession.

A few quotations. "All the gardens and flowers will be dead". "I think life will be more cruel than it is now". "There will still be many people out of jobs (like my dad, for instance)". "It won't be like saying home sweet home, it will be more like slum sweet slum". "More children will be wagging school and not many people will obey the law". "Women will be frightened to have babies because it costs so much to keep them". "There might not be any cloth left to make our clothes with, and we might have to wear rags". "Electricity would run out because so much fuel is being used". "People might die because the place is so dirty". "By 2000 Britain will be a pretty depressing place. Perhaps someone will have learned to say no to the demands of the unions but I don't think anybody will, so heaven help us".

It was suggested that the competitors might focus on specific aspects of life in 25 years' time - cities, work, schools, politics, families. Very few chose to write about politics, and many of those who did felt that the future would be not so much European as Communist. Most viewed this prospect with dismay. A couple of entrants thought communism a reasonable solution to our difficulties. A 13-year old boy wrote : "England is not at the moment suited to Communism. It is not the answer to everything, but it will create a family atmosphere and equal conditions for all". He believed it would be a good thing to cut down the freedom of the media which is "causing much frenzy among the people and causing panic buying and highering of the prices".

Not surprisingly, many competitors, especially in primary schools, preferred to write about everyday life, not grand political schemes. It seemed to them that in the year 2000 family life will be continuing much as at present, with some major adaptations. One was summed up by a 10-year-old : "We will probably not eat as much or need as many things". Various outcomes of the shortage of natural resources were foreseen, from a return to medieval agricultural communities to high-technology solutions, with protein pills, recycling of resources, solar energy and exploitation of the sea.

Almost everyone accepted some kind of population control as inevitable. Most proposed legal limitation of families to two children, backed by heavy fines. In one respect, several competitors thought everyday life would improve. "I think people will spend more time together, singing and playing, because television will be boring after so many years", said an eight-year-old. Few saw any real change in the position of women. "Father is still the head of the house and mother still has to do the hard jobs, like washing and ironing". And only one said that "children will have more power, in Parliament and on school boards".

Most saw pollution as the major issue for the next 25 years. Dozens of entrants had us living underground, or even under the sea, to escape it. Competitors divided pretty equally between people who thought that pollution would be controlled - by new technology, or bans on private cars, or licences costing £ 1,000 - and those who thought the cars would win.

In general, few people seemed to agree with the 11-year-old boy who wrote : "Although the year 2000 is only 25 years away, there is plenty of time for gradual change. If the whole of Western Europe formed a community to combat inflation and unemployment at least we might get back on to the right track."

053.2 (079.5) The Times Educational Supplement, 11/VII/1975

EUROPE PLUS THIRTY

The one-year project "Europe Plus Thirty" was completed at the end of September. Its director is Lord KENNET and its purpose is to advise the European Commission (who paid for the project) and Council what they should do about long-term forecasting and about technology assessment.

Briefly stated, the project recommends that the Commission should set up a long-term forecasting institute for the purpose of doing forecasting which goes beyond the conventional time horizons, sectors, and the national boundaries of futures already being researched in various directorates of the European Community, in national governments, or elsewhere. The institute would be financed mainly by the European Commission, but would have a very large degree of autonomy, be completely free to initiate work of its own, to decide about publication, and whether or not to accept proposals made by the Commission. The fundamental reasons for recommending such an institute are :

- The rapid evolution of many things within Europe, as well as of Europe's relations with the rest of the world.
- The need to consider desirable long-term alternatives, problems and policies a little more systematically.

On the other hand, it is recommended that a separate technology assessment office should not be established. It was felt that there was not much point in setting up an institute to look at the secondary, tertiary, etc., effects of technology in isolation from its primary effects and from considerations of future societal and technological alternatives ; such considerations would be central to the proposed forecasting institute.

These recommendations are now embodied in the Europe Plus Thirty Report. The Introduction and Part One set out why Europe-wide forecasting is needed, review what long-term forecasting is already being done in Europe, and discuss available forecasting techniques. Part Two consists of a review of forecasting needs and possibilities in a wide variety of specific sectors. Part Three discusses technology assessment, and Part Four specifies in some detail the type of forecasting institute that should be established.

The Report will be read with interest to see how all the major difficulties of an exercise like Europe Plus Thirty have been coped with : the need to produce ambitious results in a relatively short period ; multiple authorship ; multiple nationalities ; multiple disciplines. Most importantly, how it overcomes the ambiguities and tensions within the long-term forecasting community ; the strongly differing thoughts about the use of complex quantitative methods ; the lack of real knowledge of the usefulness of most of the fancy techniques of long-term forecasting that have been "identified" over the past ten years ; the tendency amongst some to foreget the political role of forecasting. To give information and analysis simply to "decision makers", without public participation in exploring alternative futures should, at least, mean the creation of another ivory tower.

As to the next stage, it is up to the European Commission to make a proposal to the Council of Ministers on the basis of the Report. The reasons for optimism seem to be the favourable noises made by long-term forecasters in the Community and in the national governments. The reason for pessimism is as usual money. But "Europe Plus Thirty" is designed as an instrument to improve efficiency and thus save money.

338.984 Futures, August 1975

GRANDEURS ET MISERES DE LA COOPERATION INTERNATIONALE

"J'ai bien l'impression que vous, les membres, ne nous prenez pas au sérieux. Vous vous êtes mis d'accord pour nous créer ; vous avez toujours répondu à nos lettres ; vous nous avez même accordé plus d'argent que nous n'avons pu en dépenser jusqu'à présent ; mais vous vous êtes bien gardé de recourir à nos services.

Jamais, jusqu'à présent, vous ne nous avez saisis d'un véritable problème à résoudre ; vous n'avez pas cherché conseil auprès de nous ; vous n'avez même pas essayé de conclure des accords entre vous en vous servant de nos bons offices.

Vous avez bien dit - du moins certains d'entre vous l'ont dit - que la perspective de collaborer avec notre organisation vous séduit, mais que nous ne devons pas nous mêler des priorités nationales. Quel tissu de contradictions. Si nous sommes appelés à dire que ce projet vaut mieux que celui-là ou que cette méthode doit l'emporter sur celle-là, nous nous mêlons forcément des priorités nationales".

001.83 (4)

Traduction d'extraits de l'intervention de Sir Brian Flowers, Président de la Fondation européenne de la science, lors de la présentation du Rapport annuel 1975 ; The Times Higher Education Supplement, 17/X/1975

PART TWO/DEUXIEME PARTIE

BELGIQUE : REFORME SCOLAIRE ET RATIONALISATION

La rentrée scolaire du 1er septembre 1975 a été marquée par l'entrée en vigueur des lois votées par le Parlement fin juin et instaurant l'école pluraliste et le plan de rationalisation de l'école primaire.

L'école pluraliste

La nouvelle loi introduit la notion d'école pluraliste, parallèlement à celle d'école neutre et d'école confessionnelle. Seront dénommées pluralistes les écoles :

- "qui sont reconnues comme telles par un Conseil de l'Enseignement pluraliste, dont la compétence, la composition et le fonctionnement sont déterminés par arrêté royal" ;
- "qui adoptent le statut d'établissement d'utilité publique" et
- "qui satisfont aux exigences de pluralité et de pluralisme :
  - . être administrées par un organe composé de manière à représenter la diversité des principales tendances existant dans la communauté concernée. La composition de cet organe doit être approuvée par le Conseil de l'Enseignement pluraliste, qui veille à ce qu'aucune tendance philosophique ou religieuse n'y dispose de la majorité ;
  - . disposer d'un personnel directeur et enseignant, auxiliaire d'éducation, médical et paramédical, social et psychologique qui adhère à la charte de l'enseignement pluraliste. Cette adhésion prend la forme d'une déclaration signée et actée ;
  - . être accessibles à tous sans discrimination ;
  - . se donner un projet éducatif et pédagogique qui corresponde à l'esprit de l'enseignement pluraliste tel que le définit sa charte et qui est caractérisé entre autres par :

    le libre choix des parents entre le cours de religion et de morale d'un des cultes reconnus, et le cours de morale non confessionnelle ;

    un esprit ouvert qui reconnaît la diversité des opinions et des attitudes, l'apprécie positivement et, la dépassant, met l'accent sur les valeurs communes ;

    la liberté pour tout membre du personnel de faire connaître son engagement personnel, en s'abstenant de tout prosélytisme et en respectant le développement de la personnalité de l'élève, dans la mesure où cette attitude est conciliable avec la tâche qui lui est dévolue en matière d'éducation ;

  être organisées de manière telle que la communauté scolaire soit associée à la gestion et que les écoles soient en principe ouvertes à l'ensemble de la communauté locale".

Dans le rapport de la Commission de l'Education nationale du Parlement, il est indiqué que "la discussion relative à ce qu'il faut entendre par tendances philosophiques ou religieuses a montré qu'il s'agit en fait de

ceux tendances : d'une part, les catholiques et d'autre part les libres penseurs." Une école pluraliste devrait donc être administrée par un conseil d'administration composé de catholiques et de libres penseurs.

La loi elle-même ne contient pas d'indication quant au pourcentage à respecter pour la composition du corps enseignant d'une école pluraliste. L'exposé des motifs précise à ce sujet : "Afin de donner à chacune des deux grandes tendances idéologiques les garanties nécessaires, le personnel définitif sera composé, pendant la phase expérimentale, de manière telle que les porteurs d'un titre de capacité délivré par l'enseignement non-confessionnel d'une part, et par l'enseignement confessionnel d'autre part, représentent une proportion de 40 à 60 %. Quant cette proportion n'est pas atteinte, toute nomination s'effectuera dans le but de la réaliser.

Rationalisation du primaire

Au niveau de l'école primaire, les réformes ont trait principalement à la rationalisation, c'est-à-dire à la suppression des écoles trop peu fréquentées. Pour être maintenue ou pour conserver le droit à la subvention, une école ou une classe d'enseignement primaire doit compter, le trentième jour après la date de la rentrée scolaire 1975/76 et 1976/77, au moins :

- 30 élèves lorsque l'école est située dans une commune dont la densité de population est supérieure à 125 habitants au km2 ;
- 15 élèves pour une densité de population entre 50 et 125 habitants au km2 ;
- 8 élèves pour une densité de population inférieure à 50 habitants au km2.

En outre, à partir de cette année, le Fonds national de garantie des bâtiments scolaires n'octroiera la garantie de l'Etat et les subsides-intérêt aux emprunts conclus pour la construction scolaire qu'aux écoles atteignant les normes suivantes :

- 140 élèves dans les communes à densité de population supérieure à 125 habitants au km2 ;
- 60 élèves dans les communes à densité de population entre 50 et 125 habitants au km2 ;
- 35 élèves dans les communes à densité de population inférieure à 50 habitants au km2.

En même temps, les fusions et groupements d'écoles primaires seront favorisés, afin de supprimer, jusqu'en 1980, toute école trop peu fréquentée.

Scolarité à 5 ans

Dans une vingtaine d'écoles primaires de l'Etat (moitié dans le régime français, moitié dans le régime néerlandais) débutera l'expérience de la scolarité à cinq ans, avec la participation de seuls volontaires. Les élèves seront admis dans ces écoles dès l'âge de cinq ans après un entretien entre les parents, les enseignants et le centre psycho-médico-social. Selon les ministres, le but sera de tester une restructuration des études maternelles et primaires en évitant les cassures trop nettes. Dans l'optique d'une telle "pédagogie de continuité" la première année scolaire deviendrait une classe de jeux éducatifs.

L'enseignement rénové

Dans le régime néerlandais, la principale réforme sera l'extension de l'enseignement rénové à toutes les écoles secondaires de l'Etat, la majorité d'entre elles l'ayant déjà adoptée. En ce qui concerne les autres réseaux, l'enseignement rénové est en vigueur en Flandres dans tous les établissements provinciaux et communaux, à quelques exceptions près, ainsi que dans une fraction non négligeable des écoles libres (catholiques).

Parmi les modifications de programme intervenues, il faut citer notamment l'étude obligatoire d'une troisième langue dès la deuxième année du secondaire pour tous les élèves de toutes les options, et l'obligation générale de suivre le cours de formation technologique dans le cycle d'observation, à raison de quatre heures par semaine.

Dans le régime français, la situation est différente. Selon le Ministre de l'Education, l'enseignement rénové doit toujours faire face à certaines oppositions de la part des enseignants et des parents. Les efforts doivent donc tendre à rapprocher, autant que faire se peut, les régimes traditionnels et rénovés. Ce n'est qu'après une longue concertation qu'il pourra être possible de réunifier l'enseignement secondaire. Actuellement la proportion d'écoles secondaires francophones ayant opté pour le rénové s'élève à 59, 5 % pour le réseau de l'Etat, à 17, 8 % pour le réseau communal, à 68, 7 % pour le réseau provincial et à 22, 8 % pour le réseau subventionné libre ; soit au total 36, 5 %.

37.014.3 (493) Le Soir, 30/VIII/1975 ; Forum, n° 13/1975 ; M. B.

DENMARK : EXTENSION OF EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

Parliament is to be asked by the Minister of Education, Mrs. Ritt BJERREGAARD, to pronounce on the principle of introducing a twelve-year period of continuous schooling. The nine-year compulsory school is at present being implemented after the decision of Parliament in June of this year (see News-letter 2/75). The government wants to see this nine-year period completed by a further three years of schooling open to all who wish to profit from it. The tenth and twelfth years would prepare students for further studies and for professional life. In the short term, vocational training would be closely geared to labour market conditions, but it is envisaged that in the long term any sharp division between academic and vocational courses would disappear and that students would be able to transfer with ease from one branch of study to another, or to return to study after a period of active employment. A positive decision by Parliament on the principle of twelve years continuous schooling would allow the Ministry to go ahead with the preparatory work. The implementation will of course depend on the availability of the necessary funds.

The government is also considering increasing state control over vocational training and intends to enter into discussion with interested parties. In particular, it would like to regulate more closely apprenticeship schemes where availability of places is directly linked to current labour market influences.

371.2 (489) Weekendavisen, 19/IX/1975 ; B. B. P.

DENMARK : A NINE-POINT PROGRAMME FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

The parliamentary education committee has accepted by a large majority (support coming from both the left wing and the conservatives) the following nine-point programme :

- The total number of students attending full length higher education courses shall not exceed 20,000 per year before 1980.
- After consulting the parliamentary education committee, the Minister shall decide how many students may be admitted to the various higher education fields and courses.
- Any possible expansion of higher education facilities shall be concentrated mainly in the western part of the country. The distribution of tasks between existing and new institutions shall be revised.
- The development of short courses shall be encouraged as an alternative to full length courses.
- Educational and vocational guidance shall be developed at all levels of the education system. Surveys of job opportunities for postgraduate students shall be conducted, and in co-operation with interested parties in the labour market openings for graduates shall be developed.
- Higher education shall be restructured with a view to promoting an improved relationship between education and the labour market, shorter periods of study, the possibility to halt one's studies at various stages,

flexible transfer between fields of study, recurrent education opportunities, a reduction in the number of drop-outs and avoidance of an excessive extension of study time beyond that normally expected

- The Minister shall decide the introduction of numerus clausus in certain fields of higher education, after having informed the parliamentary education committee of the number of applicants, of the labour market situation and of the means for limiting admission. No one category of applicants shall be deprived of access to higher education as the result of the application of numerus clausus. Admission criteria shall not be rigid.

- More efficient control and guidance in respect of higher education shall be promoted by the implementation of a budgetary system permitting the distribution of grants to teaching and research according to flexible criteria, and by an appropriate student registration system. The parliamentary research committee shall be responsible for matters concerning research policy.

- The Minister shall provide the parliamentary education committee with data in respect of the implementation of a three-term system.

378 : 37.014 (489) Weekendavisen, 26/IX/1975 ; B.B.P.

FRANCE : NOUVELLE ETAPE DE LA REFORME SCOLAIRE

Après l'adoption, fin juin, du texte de loi relatif à l'Education (cf. News-letter/Faits Nouveaux 2/75), le ministre de l'Education M. HABY va à présent concentrer ses efforts sur trois points précis : la préparation des textes d'application, la définition des nouveaux contenus de l'enseignement et l'élaboration de deux nouveaux projets de loi sur les personnels et les établissements.

La question des programmes, en particulier, devra faire l'objet d'études approfondies. Il s'agit en effet, de revoir le contenu de toutes les disciplines enseignées en fonction des objectifs assignés par la loi aux différents établissements : l'école élémentaire, le collège (de la sixième à la troisième) et le lycée (de la seconde au baccalauréat). M. HABY souhaiterait en particulier, que l'on procède, notamment au collège, à des regroupements de disciplines pour donner aux élèves une formation moins morcelée et plus homogène. La formation scientifique par exemple, devrait être conçue comme un tout, en regroupant la physique, la chimie, la biologie et la technologie ; de même pour la formation artistique qui devrait englober le dessin, la musique et les travaux manuels.

Dès avant les vacances des commissions ont travaillé sur ce projet et le ministre envisage de leur adjoindre des personnalités connues pour leurs travaux interdisciplinaires. Des propositions pour chacun des grands domaines de la formation à donner aux élèves (littérature, sciences, sciences économiques et humaines, arts, etc.) devraient ensuite lui être soumises.

Ces propositions couvrant l'ensemble de la formation, de l'école élémentaire au baccalauréat, devraient aboutir à définir des objectifs généraux plutôt que des programmes détaillés. Une grande liberté serait laissée aux enseignants dans l'application de ces directives générales.

La mise en place de la réforme doit être complétée par deux éléments importants : la loi sur les personnels et celle sur les établissements. La première doit définir une politique d'ensemble des personnels enseignants et revoir les différentes catégories, les obligations de service, la définition des tâches, la formation initiale et permanente, l'inspection, etc. L'idée générale est le désir de réduire les clivages entre les catégories et de donner davantage d'unité et de souplesse à l'ensemble du système. Les différences entre les modes de formation et les définitions des tâches devraient notamment être réduites.

Quant à la loi sur les établissements, elle doit déterminer le statut de ces derniers dans le cadre d'une autonomie financière, administrative et pédagogique plus grande. "Il faut faire de l'établissement une cellule communautaire autonome capable de définir ses propres conditions de fonctionnement", a déclaré M. HABY.

"Révolutionnaires et conservateurs devront se mettre d'accord et se plier aux décisions communes. C'est le pari de l'autonomie".

Toutes ces transformations vont demander un travail considérable d'élaboration et de concertation. Cependant, le ministre veut aller vite et souhaite que les propositions sur les programmes soient achevées dans six mois. Il restera ensuite à entreprendre un vaste effort de recyclage des corps enseignants.

Sans attendre l'achèvement de ces vastes travaux, M. HABY souhaite dès à présent encourager l'innovation et l'initiative pédagogique dans les établissements qui y seraient prêts. Selon lui, ces transformations devraient dépasser le cadre encore trop étroit du libre emploi de 10% de l'horaire par les enseignants (cf. News-letter/ Faits Nouveaux 3/74) et la pratique pourrait, dans certains cas, devancer les décisions définitives.

37.014.3 (44) Le Monde de l'Education, n° 9, septembre 75;C.P.

FRANCE : ACTIONS DE FORMATION EN FAVEUR DES JEUNES DEMANDEURS D'EMPLOI

La France connaît actuellement, comme d'ailleurs la plupart des pays européens, une grave crise de l'emploi dont les premières victimes sont les jeunes et plus particulièrement ceux qui, à la recherche d'un premier emploi ne sont, de ce fait, pas même considérés comme chômeurs.

Préoccupé par ce problème, le gouvernement a décidé de prendre un certain nombre de mesures en leur faveur. Ainsi, en janvier 1975 était lancée une opération dite "cinquante mille jeunes" qui s'adressait aux demandeurs d'emploi âgés de 16 à 20 ans, inscrits à l'agence pour l'emploi, ayant quitté le système scolaire en juin 1974 sans diplôme professionnel ou technique ou ayant achevé leurs études à cette même date avec une qualification inadaptée.

Au cours d'une conférence de presse début juillet, M.P. GRANET, Secrétaire d'Etat auprès du premier ministre chargé de la formation professionnelle, a dressé le bilan de cette opération. Il a notamment indiqué que, sur 130.000 jeunes demandeurs d'emploi initialement recensés, 16.400 se trouvaient en stage, une moyenne environ étant accueillis dans des établissements publics. Parmi ces stagiaires, la moitié sont dépourvus de tout diplôme d'enseignement général, près du tiers sortent des classes pratiques et à peine plus de 20 % ont reçu un début de formation technique. "Alors qu'on observe dans la population concernée entre deux tiers et trois quarts de jeunes filles, a en outre indiqué M. GRANET, la répartition des stagiaires est pratiquement inverse : environ deux tiers de garçons".

550 stages sont actuellement en cours. Ils s'achèveront à la fin de 1975. Dans 313 d'entre eux les stagiaires reçoivent une formation professionnelle conduisant pour moitié à des métiers du secteur secondaire et pour moitié à une profession dans le tertiaire. 247 stages doivent assurer une "préformation", une orientation ou une mise à niveau.

M. GRANET a assuré que les bénéficiaires de l'opération "cinquante mille jeunes" - la seule jusqu à présent, a-t-il précisé, en faveur de cette catégorie de population, dont on puisse tirer un bilan concret - devraient trouver plus aisément un emploi à l'issue de leurs stages. "Il existe actuellement 50 à 100.000 offres d'emploi qui, sans exiger une formation poussée, nécessitent néanmoins un minimum de qualification", a-t-i déclaré. Le secrétaire d'Etat à la formation professionnelle estime que ces postes,situés au bas de l'échelle hiérarchique, pourront ainsi être pourvus sans difficulté. M. GRANET a d'autre part annoncé différentes mesures destinées à améliorer le système en vigueur. A partir du 1er juillet, l'indemnité mensuelle versée aux stagiaires a été augmentée. A la rentrée, ils recevront en outre une prime de transport et d'hébergement pour se rendre et séjourner sur les lieux de stage. M. GRANET pense ainsi que 30.000 nouveaux jeunes gens pourront être accueillis en septembre, en priorité dans les stages préparant directement à la vie professionnelle.

331.6 - 053.7 (44) Le Monde, 3/VII/1975 ; C.P.

FRANCE : NOUVEAUX CRITERES D'ATTRIBUTION DES CREDITS AUX UNIVERSITES

Répartir plus équitablement les crédits entre les universités, favoriser l'innovation, telles sont les deux idées qui ont provoqué une révision des critères d'attribution des crédits d'Etat, décidée en juillet par M. J.P. SOISSON, Secrétaire d'Etat aux universités et approuvée par la conférence des présidents d'université.

Les ressources des universités proviennent, pour 95 % de l'Etat. Outre les crédits d'équipement et les postes d'enseignant, l'Etat verse aux universités des crédits de fonctionnement. Actuellement, et depuis 1972, ceux-ci comprennent une subvention forfaitaire par mètre carré, destinée à l'entretien des bâtiments et deux subventions "par tête" d'étudiant, l'une identique pour toutes les disciplines, l'autre variant de 1, 4 pour le droit à 15, 3 pour les sciences exactes. Le système est simplifié pour les écoles d'ingénieurs et les instituts universitaires de technologie.

Différentes études entreprises sur le sujet ont fait ressortir le caractère par trop "grossier" de ces critères. En effet, le nombre des étudiants inscrits ne veut pas dire grand-chose. Certains abandonnent en cours d'année, alors qu'ils sont toujours pris en compte pour le calcul des subventions. D'autres, appartenant aux grandes écoles, sont inscrits d'office mais ne participent pas à la vie de l'université. Il est apparu, enfin, que plus des trois quarts des dépenses des universités sont indépendantes de la présence ou non d'étudiants dans leurs murs.

M. SOISSON a donc décidé d'éliminer toute référence directe au nombre d'étudiants pour le calcul des subventions.

Le critère lié à la surface des locaux sera conservé : les universités recevront, en 1976, la somme de 47 francs par mètre carré pour l'entretien, le chauffage et le nettoyage des bâtiments (plus 0, 40 franc par mètre carré de surface non bâtie, c'est-à-dire pour la voirie et les espaces verts).

Le critère du nombre des étudiants n'est toutefois pas exclu : il est repris indirectement à travers le taux d'encadrement pédagogique et administratif. Il apparaît, en effet, qu'il existe des seuils en ce domaine : mille trois cents étudiants en lettres classiques doivent avoir autant de professeurs et d'assistants que mille cinq cents. C'est ce "taux d'encadrement", correspondant, selon les disciplines, à différents niveaux d'effectifs, que les services du secrétariat d'Etat se sont efforcés de calculer. Pour cela, ils ont, en quelque sorte, fait une "photographie" de la situation dans toutes les U.E.R. par l'envoi de questionnaires détaillés dont les réponses ont été exploitées par ordinateur. Ils ont constitué selon le nombre d'étudiants, des "familles" de disciplines et d'universités et relevé les seuils et les zones de plus grande fréquence pour les taux d'encadrement pédagogique (qui comprennent aussi bien les postes fixes d'enseignants que les heures complémentaires).

En sciences, par exemple, ce taux est plus élevé pour les "familles"de 0 à 2000 étudiants que pour celles de 2000 à 4000 étudiants ; mais il progresse très nettement pour les "familles" de plus de 4000 étudiants (en raison du nombre des chercheurs). En lettres, au contraire, le taux d'encadrement est strictement décroissant quand on parcourt les trois "familles" : 0 à 1. 500, 1. 500 à 4. 500 et plus de 4. 500 étudiants. On parvient ainsi à obtenir, pour chaque université, un taux d'encadrement pédagogique normalisé.

La même opération a été réalisée pour l'encadrement administratif et technique en s'appuyant non plus sur la notion de "famille" mais sur celle de "structure" de l'université (monodisciplinaire, bi, tri ou quadridisciplinaire) et sur sa taille. C'est la somme des encadrements ainsi normalisés en personnel enseignant, administratif et technique qui devrait constituer pour chaque université l'unité de compte permettant de calculer la subvention à laquelle elle a droit.

En ce qui concerne les crédits accordés aux universités pour des actions spécifiques, M. SOISSON a invité les présidents d'université à présenter des "programmes de reploiement et de développement" c'est-à-dire les innovations (nouveaux enseignements, nouveaux diplômes) qu'ils entendent mettre en oeuvre et éventuellement les suppressions qu'ils envisagent. C'est en partie en fonction de ces programmes que seront attribués les crédits pour 1976.

Enfin, le secrétaire d'Etat a annoncé une augmentation de 15 % de la somme globale attribuée aux universités pour 1976. Mais si l'on tient compte du crédit spécial de 64 millions de francs accordé au cours de cette

année, et qui a sans doute évité l'asphyxie à de nombreuses universités, l'augmentation : celle ne sera en 1976 que de 10 %, par rapport à 1975. En francs constants, il est donc difficile de parler d'une véritable "progression" des crédits de fonctionnement des universités.

37.014.543 : 378 (44) Le Monde, 22/X/1975 ; C.P.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY : FINANCIAL CUTS AND NEW APPROACHES

Education seems to have lost its glamour and priority. The Federal Government has had to cut its education budget for 1976 by 10.2 per cent despite a rise of 4.1 per cent in the total budget. The Federal Ministry of Education and Science, which in 1975 had 4.4 billion DM to spend, will in 1976 have to limit its expenditure to 3.9 billion. Cuts have also been carried out or are expected in the education budgets of the Laender which maintain all schools, colleges and universities. These economies have been forced upon the country by the continuing recession, the decreasing tax revenues and the fast increasing debts of the State. The education budgets have been hit hardest --the top priority which the Federal Chancellor W. BRANDT accorded in 1969 to education has worn out.

What are the reasons for this development ? Political parties and public opinion, are disenchanted with education. The big reforms - comprehensive schools, university reform, vocational training reform - seem to have come to a grinding halt in the midst of bitter strife. The great goals - equality of opportunity and a more egalitarian society - are as remote as ever, although considerable means and enthusiasm have been invested in them. Youth unrest and radicalism, though now evaporating on account of the recession and growing unemployment, have terrified the tax payer and promoted "immobilism". The education system is still expanding in its upper levels, but the decreasing birth-rate - from a peak of 1.027 million in 1966 to 639,000 in 1975 - is taking the pressure off the system and points towards consolidation.

However, all is not bleak. The obsession with the quantitative is giving way to a reappraisal of the qualitative, and educational considerations are beginning to supersede the ideological and sociological ones. This reversal of tendencies has for instance led to the creation, by the Education Ministries, of "Anwalt des Kindes" committees (advocate of the child) first in Baden-Wurttemberg, one of the biggest Laender, and then in other Laender. The Baden-Wurttemberg committee under the chairmanship of Professor B. HASSENSTEIN, of Freiburg University, recently published its first recommendations.

One of the main requests of the Committee is that no marks be given in the two first years of primary school and that marking in later years be revised to take into consideration not only the results of written examinations and essays but also extra-curricular activities and oral participation in instruction periods. The examination pressure and the growing achievement stress must be relieved and the excessive emphasis on academic subjects and scientific matters, which contributed to the cost explosion in education, be lessened. Physical and artistic education as well as vocational education are still neglected fields in which many pupils could be successful and thus happy at school. Selection by failure is in the Committee's opinion a perversion of education. Although education cannot change society, it can at least help adolescents and adults to lead fuller and richer lives. Thus the main aim of educational reform should be to promote success and happiness at school.

Such recommendations may seem trivial. However, they may mark a turning-point in the educational discussion which in a period of financial stringency and disillusionment has to find new approches of greater modesty and realism.

37.014.543 (430.1) Akademischer Dienst, 4/IX/1975 ;
Bildung und Wissenschaft, No. 12/1975 ; v.M.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY : REFORM PROSPECTS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

In mid-September a four-day hearing was organised by the Federal Parliament's Committee which since mid-June has been debating the Federal Bill on the reform of vocational education (see News-letter 1/75). Employers' associations, trade unions, vocational teachers' associations, researchers, and experts from all quarters participated in the hearing. The results were, as was to be expected, highly contradictory. While the representatives of industry, crafts and commerce held that the Bill went too far, that it would impose a heavy financial burden on the economy and would not provide incentives for creating new training places, the trade unions stated that the Bill did not go far enough and asked for more state control and more radical reform. Thus the middle of the road policy, which the Federal Government had followed in preparing the Bill, seemed to satisfy nobody.

Already at the end of May the Christian Democrat Länder had rejected the Bill with their slender majority of one voice in the Second Chamber (Bundesrat). The decision was by no means unexpected. The opposition had repeatedly voiced its dissatisfaction with two of the Bill's chief proposals : a levy of 0.25 % on the wage and salary bill of all firms with more than 20 employees to finance the provision of training places when the demand for them exceeded the supply by more than 12.5 %. Instead the Christian Democrats favour a system of mutual financial support by the employers' organisations and argue that the levy would be an intolerable burden at a time of economic recession. Furthermore, the opposition rejects the proposal to set up a Federal Institute for Vocational Education to supervise apprentice training, both in the firms and in part-time vocational schools, on a national basis. They maintain that the new institute would deprive the Länder and the chambers of commerce, crafts and industry of their traditional autonomy.

As the coalition of Social Democrats and Liberals can muster a majority in the Federal Parliament (Bundestag), they may finally force the Bill through. As it has been rejected by the Bundesrat, however, it cannot enter into force, and there is little prospect of the Mediation Committee of both Houses arriving at a compromise which could then be resubmitted for enactment. Thus the Bill may share the fate of the Higher Education Reform Bill which is still held-up by conflict between the Houses of Parliament.

Even so, some progress has been made as far as the educational component of vocational training is concerned. Before the summer recess the Educational Planning Committee of the Federation and the Länder reached agreement on a priority vocational education programme. It comprises the following measures recommended for implementation by both the Federal and Länder governments :

- Basic vocational education year : in the school year 1974/75, 20,000 pupils completed this tenth year of full-time schooling which is still experimental and provides an introduction to a vocational field to be followed by later specialisation in a two-year period of apprenticeship (instead of three, as is the rule for most trades and crafts). By 1978/79 provision will be made for 80,000 pupils to attend such courses either at school or in a combination of instruction at school and training in a firm.

- Youth unemployment : there are at present some 130,000 unemployed adolescents in the 15-19 age-group, the main reason for their unemployment being their poor educational and vocational qualifications. Some 20,000 places will be urgently provided for them at vocational schools to upgrade their qualifications, while the Volkschochulen (adult education centres)will offer special courses in foreign languages, book-keeping, secretariat techniques, etc. for them.

- Part-time vocational schooling : in 1973/74 the part-time vocational school (attended on a compulsory day-release basis by all adolescents of the 16-19 age-group who are not in full-time education) catered for 1.6 million pupils or 49 % of the age-group and provided on average 8.4 periods of weekly instruction. By 1978/79, 12 periods per week will be given, at least to first-year pupils.

- Training centres : in 1973, 23,000 places were available in such centres, which are maintained by craft and industrial organisations. By 1978, 27,000 additional places will be created with financial assistance from the Federal Government.

- Vocational training at post-secondary level : the Committee recommended that the pilot-experiments undertaken in some of the Länder should be evaluated and "further education centres" outside the universities and colleges be created on a larger scale than hitherto to accomodate grammar school leavers who cannot find a place in higher education.

These recommendations cover those main fields of vocational education reform on which a broad consensus between all concerned exists, and where experience will first have to be gained from a limited number of projects with a view to extending them later on. Their implementation, however, depends in the first instance on the availability of a sufficient number of teachers. The shortage of teachers in vocational schools has been chronic and will persist for the next few years, although in all other branches there is already an increasing surplus of teachers. This may be the reason why the number of students following courses which will qualify them for posts in vocational schools has suddenly risen : there were 19.000 such students in 1974/75 as compared to 10,000 in 1972/73. If this trend continues, as is to be expected, the staffing of vocational schools, which has so far prevented their expansion and reform, will no longer be a problem.

The prospects as far as the second precondition for the implementation of the Committee's recommendations- finance - is concerned, look less hopeful. The Finance Ministers of the Länder have already declared that they will do their best, but cannot under present economic conditions guarantee full implementation of the recommendations.

377.1 : 37.014.3 (430.1) The Times Higher Educational Supplement, 30/V/75 ; Information Bildung Wissenschaft, 26/VI/75 ; Akademischer Dienst, 1/X/75;v. M.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY : UNIVERSITY ADMISSION - GENERAL DISCONTENT AND NEW PROPOSALS

It has now become clear that the elaborate university admission procedure, as at present implemented by the Central Admissions Office at Dortmund on the basis of an inter-state treaty between the eleven Länder which came into force in May 1973 (see News-letter 2/73 and 4/74), will soon require drastic revision. The death knell of the current system was sounded by a judgement of the Bavarian Administrative Court which in August ruled that one of the central provisions of the present system violates the Bavarian constitution.

The provision in question is the so-called bonus/malus regulation. The average mark in the grammar school leaving certificate (Abitur) is worked out for each Land and year, and then compared with the federal average. If there is a discrepancy the overall Abitur mark of each pupil in the Land concerned is adjusted upwards or downwards by that difference. The latest federal average was 2.8 (on a scale ranging from one, very good. to four, pass) whereas the Bavarian average was 2.6. Thus all Abiturienten from Bavaria got a "malus", a worsening by 0.2, whereas Abiturienten from e. g. North Rhine-Westphalia where the average mark was 3. got a "bonus", an improvement by 0.2. This arithmetical levelling out - regarded as necessary by the Education Ministries to prevent Abiturienten from one Land taking up too many or too few of the scarce study places - has now been ruled unconstitutional in Bavaria : it violates, it is stated, the principles of equality and of university admission according to individual achievement.

The ten other Education Ministries have thereupon appealed to the Federal Constitutional Court to grant an injunction which will prevent the Bavarian judgement from taking effect until an alternative solution can be found. Such a solution, however, is not yet in sight ; although committees and individual experts have put forward numerous proposals, no consensus on a new system has yet been reached.

The present system is as follows : the available study places are listed for each winter and summer term by the individual universities, checked by the Education Ministry of the Land concerned, and recorded at the Central Admissions Office. There are at present 26 numerus clausus subjects for which demand exceeds the number of available places (e. g. in the winter term 1974/75 there were 4,417 places in medicine and 23,954 applicants). A certain quota of the available places is reserved for foreign students (8 per cent) and for cases of special social hardship (up to 15 per cent). Of the remaining places 60 per cent are allocated according to best average Abitur marks (in medicine at present up to 1,8) and 40 per cent according to a "waiting list" (in the winter term 1974/75 Abiturienten of 1970 with an average of up to 3,5 were admitted to medical studies).

This system of allocation of life chances on the basis of decimal points has met with bitter criticism. The Bavarian judgement was therefore applauded by public opinion, and the Education Ministries have come under growing pressure to propose a better system.

Three main proposals have so far been made. The former Federal Minister of Justice, Mr. P. JAHN, who at present presides over the Mediation Committee of both Houses of Parliament set up to find an acceptable compromise on the ill-fated Higher Education Reform Bill, suggested grouping applicants according to their Abitur marks and allocating study places within each group by lottery, if necessary. Group one would comprise Abiturienten with average marks of between 1.0 and 1.9 who would compete for 50 per cent of available places, Group two Abiturienten with average marks of between 2.0 and 2.9 competing for 30 per cent of places, and Group three (the weakest candidates) competing for the remaining 20 per cent of places. However, the lottery system, which is a main feature of this proposal, seems to be unacceptable to the opposition parties and to large sectors of public opinion.

Baden-Württemberg's Education Minister, W. HAHN, who is one of the spokesmen of the opposition, declared that he would be prepared to accept these three groups (with the proviso that the first two groups should each compete for 40 per cent and the third group for 20 per cent of available places). He rejected the lottery system and proposed the introduction of subject specific aptitude tests. The preparation of such tests has already been commissioned from Professor J. HITPASS and other leading psychologists by the Federal Education Ministry, but it will take at least until 1977 for the first tests in medicine and dentistry to be ready. Whether tests that are reliable predictors of study success in specific subjects can in fact be developed is highly controversial among German psychologists.

The third proposal which is at present being discussed suggests introducing a quota system for each Land which would thus get a fixed share of available places and, at the same time, admitting 20-25 per cent more applicants than there are places. These admissions would be provisional and valid only for a period of up to two years. It would then be for the universities and colleges to select the most able candidates on the basis of the academic achievement during this probationary period.

None of these proposals has as yet been generally accepted. The search for an "Abitur plus X" as the most equitable admission criterion - with all its implications on secondary and higher education policy - continues.

378.141.224 (430.1) Akademischer Dienst, 1/X/1975 ; The Times Higher Education Supplement, 19/IX/1975 ; v.M.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY : NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIELD OF DISTANCE STUDIES

An "Open University" gets under way

The first Distance University (Fernuniversität) (see News-letter 2/74) was officially inaugurated in early October by Dr. RAU, Minister of Arts, Sciences and Research for North Rhine-Westphalia. Its headquarters are in Hagen and it is now admitting its first students - some 1,300, a little more than one-third of those who applied.

The new institution will function as an independent, fully integrated comprehensive university, and its students will follow courses at various levels leading to both conventional degrees and diplomas. Initially, the university, which has an academic staff of some 150, plans to offer courses in mathematics, economics and education. It is intended that the university will, like any traditional institution, eventually provide research facilities for its academic staff. A major difference between it and the British Open University is that, at least for the time being, broadcasting will not be used. Instead teaching will chiefly be by means of correspondence courses, cassettes and tapes.

So far 26 study centres have been designated in towns which can offer the necessary space, are easily accessible by road and rail, and have good public libraries. In a few instances, the centres form part of existing higher education institutions. Students are expected to use the facilities of these centres, in order to meet their teachers, course tutors and counsellors, and to meet fellow students. They will also serve as examination centres.

It is envisaged that a full-time student will normally study for some 40 hours a week and on average one-fifth of his time will be spent in a study centre. The entire annual study programme is planned to extend over 47 weeks - 34 weeks of work at home, four weeks of courses at a centre, five weeks of examination preparation, and two weeks each for sitting the actual examination and for preparing the next year's courses.

A key function of the Fernuniversität will be to take pressure off existing universities in North Rhine-Westphalia. The Land Government is also looking for cheaper ways to provide higher education and estimates that the cost a student place will be about one-third of comparable costs at conventional universities, provided some 9,000 students register in the first phase of the university's development. The eventual student target figure, to be achieved after five years, is between 20,000 and 30,000.

It is interesting to note that 36 per cent of the present students have already completed a study course at a university or a college and wish to study for a further degree or diploma. Thirty per cent have registered as full-time and 50 per cent as part-time students, the latter being in gainful employment. The remainder follow specific subject courses without wishing for the time being to graduate.

All postal courses to be licensed ?

The Federal Republic of Germany has about 180 private correspondence schools. Nearly a quarter of a million students are following the 1,480 courses they are currently offering. Most of these are vocational, leading to qualifications awarded either by the state or by various trade and professional bodies. Others offer general education, many preparing participants for external examinations at Abitur or intermediate level. A few are simply hobby courses.

At present, correspondence schools are subject to minimal state supervision by the Federal Institute of Vocational Education Research in West Berlin and the Central Office for Correspondence Tuition in Cologne. The latter body, established five years ago by a joint agreement between the Länder education ministries, is empowered to test the quality of the tuition provided by any such school if requested to do so by a majority of the Länder. Otherwise, both organizations merely examine courses submitted to them voluntarily and grant their seal of approval to those which satisfy their criteria.

On the whole, the correspondence schools have a poor reputation. Investigations by the two supervisory bodies have shown that many of their courses are pedagogically unsound and frequently do not cover all the topics required for public examinations. Furthermore, a number of them have been guilty of misleading advertising and pressure selling techniques. To remedy this situation, Mr. H. ROHDE, Federal Minister for Education and Research, has drawn up a Bill which was approved by the Cabinet in July and is to be presented to the Federal Parliament this session.

Its threefold purpose is to improve the quality of postal tuition which should be integrated into the education system as a whole, to introduce a licensing practice for correspondence courses and to protect the consumer from sharp practice. Courses will be subjected to testing before being allowed on to the market. Their content and teaching method will be analysed to ensure they are capable of fulfilling their stated aims. Vocational courses will also have to conform to the requirements laid down in the Vocational Training Act.

Close co-operation between the federal and Länder authorities will be needed to keep the procedure for authorizing courses reasonably straightforward and avoid duplication. All applications for authorization will in future have to be made to the Land concerned and in the case of vocational courses they must be accompanied by a favourable report previously obtained from the Federal Institute of Vocational Education Research. The Bill assumes that the Länder will continue to entrust the actual testing to a single joint organization like the Central Office in Cologne.

There is general agreement that all correspondence courses should in future be licensed, and that they have an important role to play in particular in vocational education where changing patterns of technology emphasize the need for retraining schemes. However, the Länder are reluctant to grant the federal authorities too wide an area of competence in this field. It is therefore doubtful whether the present Bill will in fact enter into force.

37.018.43 : 378 (430.1)

The Times Higher Education Supplement, 10/X/1975 ;
The Times Educational Supplement, 26/IX/1975 ; v. M.

IRELAND : RESULTS OF A PILOT PROJECT ON COMPENSATORY EDUCATION

The recently published report of a pre-school programme for socially disadvantaged children, funded by the Bernard van Leer Foundation, reveals a high level of satisfaction among the parents of children who participated in the project. Known as "The Rutland Street Experiment", the project was begun in 1969 ans was designed to investigate the deeper causes of school failure in a depressed area and to develop appropriate strategies to prevent it. The project has attracted great attention in Ireland and abroad.

The project took the form of a special education programme for children between the ages of three and eight years, with emphasis on the pre-school level. Two main strategies were used to improve the children's chances of school success : the development of a special curriculum to foster the children's language and cognitive abilities and the active involvement of parents.

During the five years which the experimental group of 90 children spent in the project, their cognitive development and school performance were monitored. The report compares their progress with that of a control group of children in the area who did not participate in the project and with that of a further group of children drawn from non-disadvantaged backgrounds.

The report notes that as a result of the programme mothers felt that verbal communication between themselves and their children had increased. They read more to their children and used corposal punishment less. It was also found that compensatory education programmes given to children between the ages of three and five years could stimulate the cognitive development of children from a disadvantaged background. Effects were most obvious at the end of the pre-school period and despite fading were still in evidence at the age of eight years. According to the report, home involvement is a critical component of a successful compensatory programme. The report goes on to call for techniques to be developed to deal with learning problems experienced by children at the primary education stage and particularly to impart basic reading skills.

373.553 (417) The Times Educational Supplement, 18/VII/1975 ; W.F.B.

ITALIE : PROPOSITIONS EN VUE DE LA CREATION DE L'ECOLE SECONDAIRE SUPERIEURE POLYVALENTE

Une tendance commune - le désir de voir instaurée une école secondaire polyvalente - se dégage des cinq propositions de loi récemment présentées au parlement par différents partis politiques. Pour la plupart, ces propositions préconisent une école d'une durée de cinq ans, s'inscrivant dans une scolarité obligatoire qui va de six à seize ans, avec un tronc commun et des matières à option.

La proposition de loi du Parti socialiste italien constitue le texte le plus élaboré et le plus complet. Parmi ses points principaux, on relève les suivants :

- L'école secondaire supérieure polyvalente (scuola secondaria superiore unitaria) se substitue dans chaque district scolaire à tous les autres types d'écoles secondaires existants (lycées, écoles techniques et professionnelles etc.). Elle a une durée de cinq ans et est ouverte à tous ceux qui ont réussi leurs études à l'école moyenne (scuola media, durée de trois ans, après cinq années d'enseignement primaire).

- L'école secondaire supérieure polyvalente constitue un centre d'éducation permanente et collabore, à ce titre, aux initiatives émanant du district scolaire. En particulier, elle organise des cours pour les travailleurs-étudiants, et elle assure une éducation récurrente et un service culturel au profit de la communauté locale.

- L'école secondaire supérieure polyvalente favorise le plein développement de l'individu en assurant le droit à l'étude et en fournissant un enseignement individualisé et même un appui matériel.

- La scolarité obligatoire est prolongée jusqu'à seize ans révolus (actuellement quatorze ans). Les deux premières années de la nouvelle école secondaire supérieure seront donc obligatoires pour tous les élèves. A la fin de ces deux années l'école délivre à tout élève un document certifiant sa présence effective et les résultats obtenus.

- Les études s'articulent autour d'un enseignement commun qui comporte obligatoirement les aspects suivants : langues et littérature, mathématiques et sciences naturelles, anthropologie, technologie, arts. L'éducation physique est obligatoire. Au cours de la première année, ce tronc commun occupe la majeure partie du temps d'enseignement pour se réduire dans les années qui suivent. L'enseignement d'une langue étrangère figure toujours au programme du tronc commun.

- La première année constitue une période d'orientation et, au cours de la deuxième, l'élève a la possibilité de suivre certaines filières sans pour autant que son choix soit irréversible. Un choix plus précis ne se fait qu'à l'entrée en troisième année. Les cinq filières offertes sont les suivantes :

  . littérature classique et langues vivantes ;
  . physique et mathématiques, chimie et biologie, informatique et électronique ;
  . sciences sociales, sciences juridiques et administratives, sciences économiques et gestion ;
  . électromécanique, agriculture et écologie, bâtiment et topographie ;
  . arts plastiques et musique.

- Chaque filière dispense une formation pré-professionnelle, de telle sorte que, à son terme, elle permet soit l'entrée immédiate dans le monde du travail, soit l'accès à des cours intensifs de qualification et de spécialisation professionnelle, soit encore l'accès aux cours universitaires correspondant à la filière.

- Le redoublement est exceptionnel et n'intervient que lorsque l'élève a de grosses lacunes. L'élève qui montre quelques difficultés dans la progression normale des études ne redouble pas son année mais fréquente durant les années suivantes des cours conçus en vue de combler ses lacunes. Des cours analogues sont destinés à ceux qui changent de filière. Dans l'éventualité de cours individuels ou par petits groupes, il est prévu un personnel supplémentaire.

- Dans chaque école secondaire supérieure polyvalente et pour chaque filière est institué un conseil désigné par le conseil d'établissement et présidé par le proviseur ou l'un de ses collaborateurs. Ce conseil comprend cinq enseignants de l'école, deux élèves, deux parents d'élèves et un expert faisant partie, de préférence, du centre d'orientation du district. Le conseil est appelé à faire des propositions concernant l'organisation des études dans le cadre d'une filière, et de trancher dans le cas des personnes qui reprennent leurs études après une période de travail.

- L'examen de la "maturità" (baccalauréat) comporte trois épreuves écrites et un entretien. Deux des épreuves écrites, à caractère interdisciplinaire, sont spécifiques à chaque filière. Une troisième épreuve écrite, commune à toutes les filières, consiste à traiter un sujet donné, l'élève ayant le choix entre trois sujets. L'entretien, bien qu'ayant pour point de départ les épreuves écrites et le dossier scolaire de l'élève, peut s'élargir et porter sur d'autres sujets plus ou moins proches.

- Il doit y avoir continuité entre l'enseignement dispensé à l'école moyenne et celui de l'école secondaire supérieure polyvalente, par exemple modification dans le domaine de l'enseignement du latin et établissement d'une fiche individuelle pour faciliter l'orientation future de l'élève.

- Dans les 90 jours suivant l'entrée en vigueur de la loi, le Ministre de l'Instruction publique organisera un plan national pour le recyclage des enseignants.

- Dans chaque région est institué un Comité régional de liaison entre l'école secondaire supérieure et les organes de formation professionnelle. Le Comité a pour tâche de formuler des propositions concernant notamment les rapports entre la formation générale dispensée par l'école polyvalente et les spécialisations professionnelles offertes actuellement ou susceptibles de l'être ultérieurement par les régions. Ces propositions ont trait également aux modalités du retour des travailleurs à l'école polyvalente et à l'utilisation des équipements de cette école pour les cours professionnels régionaux.

Quant au Parti républicain italien, il voudrait voir instaurée une scolarité obligatoire allant de 5 à 14 ans avec une école secondaire supérieure polyvalente d'une durée de quatre ans, dont une année d'orientation et trois années avec un tronc commun et des matières à option de caractère professionnel. Les Démocrates chrétiens préconisent une école secondaire supérieure polyvalente de cinq ans, - les deux premières années constitueraient une période d'études communes et pendant les trois dernières années l'élève aurait le choix entre quatre filières. Cette répartition a été proposée également par le Parti communiste italien, qui

voudrait en plus que l'examen de "maturità" se limite à un entretien avec des enseignants de l'école et ne comporte aucun examen écrit.

373.574 : 37.014.3 (45) Atti Parlamentari, Camera dei Deputati N. 3852 ; D.P.

NETHERLANDS : BLUEPRINT FOR EDUCATION IN THE YEAR 2000

The broad lines of a coherent education system to be introduced before the year 2000 are set out in a major document produced by the Minister of Education and Science, Dr. J.A. VAN KEMENADE, and the two State Secretaries of Education and Science, Dr. G. KLEIN (higher education) and Dr. A. VEERMAN (secondary education). The document is intended to serve as a focus for discussion in educational circles. Organizations and individuals are invited to submit their comments to the Minister before 1 August 1976 and in this way to take part in discussion on the education system that the Minister and State Secretaries wish to see introduced. The document will be revised in the light of the comments received, and after a second round of discussions a bill will be presented to Parliament.

Opportunity to develop individual gifts

The discussion document expresses the view that education must offer to all members of society the opportunity to develop their individual talents. Education can no longer be confined to teaching the skills and understanding needed for exercising a profession. It must make people more articulate and resilient, and thus give them a broader access to knowledge, work, and above all to decision-making. School environment and home environment should be brought closer together, education and upbringing reinforcing each other as much as possible. The education system must be such that children do not have to make a choice from a number of separate schools as early as age 12 or 13, a choice which in present circumstances is usually final and determines to a great extent an individual's position in society. The education system should be such that vital decisions can be delayed until pupils are 15 or 16 years of age, when aptitudes are more readily identifiable. Until then, courses should be adapted to cater for individual differences in working rate, interest and ability.

The document points out, however, that educational change which only aims at bringing about more equal opportunities may run the risk of creating "a new and possibly more distinct social dichotomy". Equal opportunity for participation in educational facilities is not enough. There should be no levelling down ; opportunity must be provided for developing individual gifts and the articulateness and social resilience of all.

Primary school

Primary education will cover the age range 4 - 12 years (see News-letter 1/74). This first stage of basic education is designed to achieve the continuous development of the pupils, with attention being paid to the individual differences shown by the children. The authors of the discussion document point to a number of difficulties likely to be encountered in the development of the new primary school : the transfer from nursery to primary school is still determined by the calendar age of the children and can therefore be a handicap to their continuous development ; the subject matter/year/class system does not allow for individual differences in development potential ; too little recognition is given to periods of consolidation in the development process, sometimes resulting in children being too readily referred to special schools.

A foreign language should be compulsory for all children at the new primary school. Other characteristics of the school would be :

- the creation of learning and teaching situations adapted to the aptitude of the pupils ;
- the creation of equal opportunities ;
- the development of the personality of each child in an uninterrupted process of education, development and learning.

Special education

The document expresses the opinion that school facilities should be such that few children have to be referred to special schools. Only in extreme cases should children be removed entirely from the ordinary school system. It is envisaged that the present 20 different types of special school be reduced to four, namely :

- motor-oriented education, for children who through lack of mental ability are destined to do work where motor and manual achievements predominate over intellectual ones ;
- remedial education, for preparing children to return to the ordinary school system ;
- compensatory education, for children with physical handicaps ;
- therapeutic education, for children with mental handicaps.

Middle school

After the primary school, in the new education system children would go to the middle school, catering for the age range 12-16 years. Pupils would follow a common course of general and vocational education. This does not mean, according to the document, that all pupils in one year would be offered all parts of the course at the same level. A unified school of this kind is rejected since the less gifted children would be failures, the gifted children would be held back, and the average child would become the norm. Breaking down the barriers in the present system must not be allowed to bring about uniformity and levelling down. Other characteristics of the middle school would include :

- replacement of early unilateral selection by a system permitting pupils to be grouped according to ability ;
- postponement until about the age of 16 years of a more or less final choice as regards future career ;
- pupil-centred education ;
- encouragement of creative, artistic, organizational and social qualities as well as of intellectual and technical qualities.

The authors of the document regard mixed ability grouping as the ideal which the middle school should endeavour to achieve, although they recognize the difficulties posed by such a policy.

High school

The high school would cater for the 16-19 age range and offer three streams :

- an academic stream, one of the aims of which would be to prepare students for higher education. Such courses would be of two years' duration;
- a vocational stream with courses lasting three to four years with the possibility of access to higher education;
- a vocational stream offering courses of two to three years' duration.

Emphasis would be laid on the independence of students, and the accent would shift from teaching to self-study. The aim of the high school must be, the document says, to see that students leave as adult members of society and responsible citizens of a democratic community. To this end the system of learning while participating in adult life would be encouraged.

Higher education

Higher education should not be seen exclusively as the next stage after higher school. The needs of mature students must also be met. Such students will include those who are alternating work with study and those who wish to make up for chances missed earlier in their careers. Whilst in principle everyone should be admitted to higher education who so wishes and has the appropriate qualifications, not everyone will be able to follow higher education courses where, when and for as long as he wishes. If selection based on prognosis and drawing lots offers no permanent solution, then selection will have to be based on required and proven achievements.

The present segregation of university education and higher vocational education must be dispensed with. The document envisages five kinds of course for the future :

- research courses ;
- training courses for which university training is required ;
- training courses for which university training is not required ;
- general educational courses in which methodology has pride of place, and
- courses in which general and specific practical skills are taught.

To enable university and higher vocational courses to be offered side by side a new kind of higher education institute is advocated. In these new institutes a special effort would be made to promote courses at present insufficiently developed.

Open school

The final component of the new education structure is the open school, an organization which will co-ordinate all facilities for further training after completion of conventional education and offer some of them itself. An open school based on the media and a network of centres would offer a second road to education for young people on reaching school-leaving age and provide a boost for adult education facilities. The open school approach will necessitate arrangements for educational leave and the spreading of courses over a longer time than in comparable full-time education. Admission criteria to courses should be liberal to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of continuing to learn throughout life.

The teachers

It is felt that some of the present duties undertaken by teachers - both in the teaching process itself, in the supervision of pupils and in organizational activities - could be taken over by teachers' aides. These members of staff would be responsible to the teachers, and their task would be to support them.

The authors of the discussion document suggest that each school should have a teachers' council with responsibilities in the fields of acquisition of material, assessment techniques and teaching methods. The council should also be involved or consulted in matters relating to appointments and to school building.

The school as a community

The school cannot, and must not, be a closed system, administratively or in any other way, says the discussion document. It urges a sound communication structure in the school. The influence of pupils on the teaching and learning process and their participation in deciding teaching arrangements should automatically be part of the school work plan and organization. The influence of pupils at primary school and during the first years of the middle school will be mainly felt in the choice and planning of many creative and recreational activities. As for older pupils, they should be given more opportunity for making choices with regard to the content of courses and the teaching methods used. They should also have a say in the way the school is run, be involved in the appointment of staff and be responsible for arrangements affecting many pupil-oriented school activities. The document urges the creation of a student council in each school. Complete self-government by a joint teacher-pupil council is rejected in the document on the grounds that it would not do justice to the general social function of the school. On school boards should sit parents, teachers, non-teaching staff, students over the age of 18 and representatives of the community or of those parts of the community which the school serves, with the local representatives comprising half the board members.

The document envisages greater parent involvement in the day-to-day life of schools with, for example, parents participating actively in certain lessons.

Teacher training

It is foreseen that a new training course for all primary school teachers will replace the present separate courses for nursery and for primary school teachers. The course would offer two specialisms open to both men and women - the 4-8 age range and the 8-12 age range. Present non-university teacher training courses would serve as a basis for future middle school teachers and for teachers in the practical streams of the high

school. There would in addition be a training course for those who would teach in the two-year academic stream in the high school. Graduates from this course could also be appointed to middle schools, for example to teach certain homogeneous groups of pupils.

More balanced use of educational facilities

In order to avoid a disproportionately large part of available funds being spent on expensive educational facilities for the relatively few at the cost of the development and/or improvement of educational facilities for all, limits will have to be set as regards higher education. Restriction of the length of time students are allowed to be registered and of the length of time allowed to be spent in all forms of higher education and in high schools must be generally accepted. The document considers it not unlikely that restricted admission policies will in future affect all higher education disciplines. An increase in the number of places available could be achieved by lowering the average cost per student per year which could only come about as a result of a reduction in the staff-student ratio.

The document is against charging fees during the years of compulsory schooling, but does raise the matter of whether those who obtain a demonstrable economic advantage from education might be called upon to pay for this priviledge.

37.014.542 (492) Documentatieblad 29/1975, no. 8 ; Uitleg 432A ; Ministry of Education and Science : "Contours of a future education system in the Netherlands"; W.F.B., A.K.

NETHERLANDS : PROPOSALS FOR NEW STATUTORY BODIES

New statutory education bodies will be introduced and the scope of existing ones enlarged if proposals of the Ministry of Education are approved by Parliament.

One of the most important of the new bodies proposed will be the Central Management Council with its five sector councils. The new council, to be chaired by the Minister of Education, will replace the Central Commission for Educational Management (CCOO), itself a recent creation set up to ensure consistency of policy among local education authorities (cf. News-letter 1/74). Unlike the CCOO, the five sector councils representing primary, secondary, teacher-training, part-time and young workers' education will consist of representatives from branch as well as umbrella organizations. For the first time, too, certain non-educational groups, such as parent and employer associations will have representation. The Central Management Council itself will deal with broad educational issues, and the sector councils will tackle problems specific to their areas of competence.

Another important new body will be the Educational Planning Bureau. It will be under the control of the Minister and will function at two levels. The Bureau will carry out research programmes at the request of the Minister and will function as a data bank compiling and storing research findings relating to educational policy and reform.

The highest of all the administrative bodies, the Education Council, which acts in an advisory capacity to the Minister, will remain, but in a revised form. Its members will be divided into two categories - general members who will form the permanent core of the Council and attend all meetings and members who will be called in on matters requiring special expertise. The Minister proposes that the Council be kept permanently informed as regards policy development instead of being a final consultative body as at present.

37.075 (492) The Times Educational Supplement, 5/IX/1975 ; W.F.B.

NORWAY : SEX EQUALITY BILL

One of the provisions of a bill recently presented to Parliament is that unseccessful applicants for a post will have the right to demand written statements setting out the educational and other qualifications possessed by the successful applicants. This right to a written statement is expected to have a major importance where vacancies are decided mainly on educational grounds, such as in the case of graduates. A recent survey by Bergen University found, for example, that only 2 % of university teaching posts were held by women. In future no difference in treatment either formally or in effect will be allowed which places either sex at an unreasonable disadvantage as regards appointments, educational opportunities, promotions, dismissals, and temporary redundancies. Job advertissements will not be allowed to specify sex. It is not yet clear, however, whether the bill will affect positive discrimination of the kind at present applied to achieve a better balance between the sexes, for instance, the recruitment of more men into primary and pre-school teaching.

396.1 (481) The Times Higher Education Supplement, 10/X/1975 ;BBP; WFB

NORWAY : INCREASED PROVISION FOR ADULT EDUCATION

Mr. Bjartmar GJERDE, Minister of Education, said when in August presenting to the press the bill on adult education that its main purpose was to give adults the opportunity to increase their knowledge and thereby promote equality between the various age-groups. The bill envisages that the schools will take responsibility for teaching adults following school-level courses, such courses being financed entirely from public funds. Adult organizations will be responsible for other courses, for which participants will have to pay fees. The bill proposes that the state should cover 80 % of the expense of adult education as against 60 % at present. Funds will be made available to encourage and permit disadvantaged social groups to profit from adult education facilities. No serious political opposition to the bill is envisaged, and it is expected that its provisions will come into force in 1977.

374.7 : 37.014.543 (481) Altenposten, 23/VIII/1975 ; B.B.P.

PORTUGAL : STUDENTS PUT OUT TO WORK

All school-leavers in Portugal intending to enter university will, from this autumn, be obliged to carry out a year's work in a wide range of community projects throughout the country, under the Government's new Students Civic Service scheme.

The idea was originally put forward as a means of occupying thousands of young people who had been refused entry to university last autumn because of a quarrel between the faculties - which would not allow selection for university entrance - and the Education Ministry, which in the end decided to have no first year students in 1974/75 at all. However, with the progressive move to the left of the regime in the first half of 1975, the idea grew and the intention now is to make the service an integral part of Portuguese higher education.

The aim is to help create in students a sense of social obligation and a realization of their privileges by bringing them into contact at an early stage with Portugal's very poor and backward working population. The hope is that the students (still overwhelmingly drawn from Portugal's very small middle and upper middle classes) will find out about the country's social problems while placing their talents and skills at the disposal of the community.

The scheme was slow in getting off the ground. First announced just after Christmas last year, it was sharply attacked both on the right and by ultra-left students, suspicious of the political influences they saw behind it. The final decision to go ahead came at the end of May. Before then, however, a skeleton staff had been seeking out projects and registering students for work, while small groups of student volunteers had already gone into action.

In Portugal's confused political situation, it was possible to proceed on the basis of a network of institutional sympathies, even without full top-level approval. Other government departments lent money, while trade unions and local authorities backed pilot schemes with facilities and accommodation.

Once the decision had been taken, the new Civic Service Commission began to move fast. By the end of July between 10,000 and 11,000 students had been sent out to work by the commission's central planning office in Lisbon. The first batch of students are volunteers (though they gain credits for taking part), and will work only until October, when they start college. From this autumn, however, participation will be compulsory, and a condition for university entrance will be a year's work under the direction of the commission.

Students are organized into teams and placed under the supervision of representatives of the particular ministry in whose domain the type of work undertaken falls. In addition to the tasks assigned by the service, students will be expected to do a foundation course of study in preparation for university. And at the end of the year, they will be required to give a full report of their activities.

A high proportion of the students are being given jobs which are broadly didactic. Nearly 800 are at present employed teaching illiterates, over 2,000 are setting up and running children's sports centres, while 800 are involved in basic health and hygiene education. Others are running nurseries and kindergartens, especially in the shanty-towns on the outskirts of Lisbon and Oporto. Students have also been given jobs organizing libraries, working in hospitals and health centres and gathering data for social surveys. Some students are helping to run a national anti-cholera campaign. One hundred and fifty students are currently engaged in making a collection of popular culture - recording songs, stories and proverbs and collecting musical instruments in order to set up a museum of popular art.

A big problem has been how to avoid competition with workers in an already overcrowded labour market. Unemployment is now close to 10 per cent, and trade unions are understandably sensitive about students providing a pool of labour for agencies happy to get work done on the cheap. A result has been that in some areas, particular categories of work (especially manual jobs) have been barred. However, the commission tries to work very closely with the union, local authorities and other government departments.

Though the commission is the creation of the Education Ministry and comes under the authority of the Minister, it has been able to rely on support from the Armed Forces Movement (MFA), which sees close links with its own "cultural dynamization" programme. The MFA has "lent" the commission 18 officers who help to run each of 18 regional centres, and there is also a coordinating council on which six officers sit. This military backing and involvement is vital, as the commission operates with a very small civilian staff and within a budget of only 300,000 contos (£ 5.4m).

Whether the scheme succeeds will depend on the students - in many universities ultra-left student organizations have already condemned it -, partly on the continuing co-operation of local and national agencies, and perhaps most of all on the outcome of the unresolved struggle for power in Lisbon.

371.386.7 (469) The Times Higher Education Supplement, 19/X/1975 ; v.M.

SWEDEN : REACTIONS TO THE REPORT ON WORKING CONDITIONS IN SCHOOL

The government is at present preparing a bill which it is intended to present to Parliament early in 1976, based on the recommendations contained in the report of the committee which examined working conditions in school (SIA report, see News-letter 5/74), and on comments received concerning these recommendations. Of the over 700 comments received most express a generally favourable opinion of the report, but there are certain points which have given rise to criticism.

While there is general support for the idea of the integrated school-day to be supplemented by other activities such as sport, drama, individual study and extra tuition, there is disagreement over the terms under which such extra activities should occur. The SIA committee had suggested that the basic school-day should comprise "fixed" activities based on a national curriculum and "free" activities decided on by the municipalities.

In addition, there should be "voluntary" activities offered outside the school-day. While these latter should "take the form of an invitation to pupils and parents", the "free activities should be obligatory and an integral part of the school-day. The comments revealed a divided opinion as regards these "free" activities, the Liberal Party, the Conservatives and some teachers unions, for example, wishing the obligation to be removed.

Comments are more critical on the proposal to replace classes by new working units permitting flexible groupings and taught by work teams including teachers, assistants and child-care specialists. Opponents of this recommendation argue that the abolition of classes would lead to a lack of security among pupils and increased bullying and truancy.

There was general agreement that there should be greater co-operation between schools and other institutions and organizations. Opinions differ, however, as regards the role that political youth organizations might play. There are those who would like to see political youth organizations participating even in "fixed" activities so as to further the political debate in school ; others take the view that the participation of such organizations should be limited to the final years of the comprehensive and the upper secondary school.

Recommendations concerning the role of parents and pupils on the proposed school management committees have also proved controversial. During the SIA discussions teachers had vigourously opposed any recommendation which would place them in the minority on management committees. Comments received on the SIA proposals are generally in favour of more democracy in the management of schools, but it is suggested that before any action is taken the findings of the Committee on local democracy should be awaited. The proposal to widen the range of persons from whom the school principal may be chosen is also contested. The teacher unions, in particular, consider that any principal should have at least the same professional competence as the teachers with whom he is to work.

Furthermore, comments revealed a certain concern as regards the lack of financial resources in the educational sector, inadequate school premises, and the availability of in-service training facilities for teachers.

In a speech on the subject of school working conditions, Mrs. L. HJELM-WALLEN, Minister for Schools, told the social-democrat party congress that it was the government's view that the "free" activities should be made obligatory, that "voluntary" activities offered outside the school-day (five hours for the youngest children) should be organized and directed in the main by organizations and associations that are not school-based. The Minister was of the opinion that reforms based on the SIA recommendations and the comments they provoked will have to be introduced gradually. The schools should evolve in the desired direction, rather than be transformed abruptly.

371 (485) Lärartidningen, 23/42, 1975; Skolvärlden, 25, 1975 ; B. B. P.

SWEDEN : PROVISION FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING ABROAD

The Committee on study tours abroad (Studiereseutredningen) proposes in its recently published report to the Minister of Education that the State, the trades union congress and the salaried employees' central organization should join to set up a body which would organize educational visits abroad with a view to promoting foreign language skills. Through government subsidies more and more people should have the chance to improve their knowledge of a foreign language by visiting the country of the language concerned. Funds to facilitate travel abroad should in particular be provided for those following adult education courses and for folk high school students, and funds should also be made available to establish reception facilities in foreign countries.

The report suggests that the creation of facilities in the United Kingdom and in the Federal Republic of Germany should help to reduce the geographic and social imbalance which is evident amongst pupils who at present go on educational visits abroad. Visits to foreign countries should take place during school time, as opposed to holiday periods. Travel opportunities should mainly be offered to pupils in the eighth year of the comprehensive school. The report envisages some 5000 pupils a year participating in educational visits abroad. The report also suggests that in the case of handicapped persons the State should contribute to the

travel costs of accompanying nurses, and that cheap student flights should be available to a broader proportion of the public.

The report can be seen as a further sign of the authorities' desire to increase the international element in Swedish education.

It is proposed that the new body should replace that present committee on school children exchange as from 1 January 1977.

800.83 : 37.018.4 (485) Sprakresor (Statens offentliga utredningar 1975 : 64) ; Svenska Dagbladet, 8/IX/1975 ; B.B.P. ; W.F.B.

SWEDEN : EDUCATIONAL BROADCASTING AND TELEVISION

Education programmes for television and radio should be made the sole responsibility of a non-profit, government-financed foundation with its own production and distribution rights, according to the report of the Commission for Radio and Television in Education (the TRU Committee). The report is entitled "A programme for sound and pictures in education", and marks the culmination of eight years' experimentation and debate to assess the use and future administration of audio-visual aids in education. The report has been widely discussed and has met with general approval. If the recommendation is accepted, it will mean that the broadcasting monopoly enjoyed by Sveriges Radio, Sweden's publicly owned broadcasting corporation, will end when its present ten-year agreement expires in 1977.

The recommended foundation would be formed initially by amalgamating Sveriges Radio's 11-year-old education department and the TRU experimental service set up in 1968. Unlike at present when some educational broadcasting, in particular that for adults, is financed out of radio and television licences, all deficits incurred would be met by state grants. In addition to broadcasts, the foundation would produce a full range of other audio-visual aids including tapes, slides, films and printed texts. These would be sold to schools and other teaching institutes at cost price.

The report argues strongly for complete independence for the foundation. It rejects the idea that the board of governors should represent interest groups from society as a whole. Instead it favours a small seven-member board comprising education and media specialists. There should, however, be an advisory council whose members would be appointed by government, educational associations, and teacher and student unions. In its first report in 1971 the TRU Committee had taken the view that the Minister of Education should have direct responsibility for supervision. This proposal was rejected, and the Committee invited to reconsider the matter.

When TRU was set up in 1967, the main concern was to combat the existing teacher shortage. Since then the dearth has turned into a surplus, and interest has turned to means of applying new technology to the needs of under-privileged groups, such as immigrants and people living in sparsely populated areas. Furthermore, the need for co-ordination in the field of audio-visual aids had become pressing. Local audio-visual centres, set up in the late 1950s, now distribute some 1.5 million sound tapes, 400,000 films and 25,000 videotapes annually.

The TRU report recommends that the foundation be set up on 1 July 1977, by which time two supplementary reports will have been published - one on the suitability of an Open University for Sweden, the other on the use of cable television.

37.018.43 (485) The Times Educational Supplement, 22/VII/1975 ; B.B.P. ; W.F.B.

UNITED KINGDOM : OUT OF SCHOOL, OUT OF WORK

More school leavers are looking for fewer jobs than at any time since the war. Figures for September show that 117,872 - just under a quarter of all those who left school in July - were still out of work.

In August, registered unemployed school leavers totalled a horrifying 158,203, which means that 40,000 must have found jobs in September. But this improvement in the situation is much less impressive when looked at in percentage terms. Last year, the number of unemployed leavers dropped by 40 per cent between August and September, and in 1972, the previous worst year (discounting the effects of raising the school leaving age), the fall was 30 per cent. This year, it is only 25 per cent.

Next month's figures are likely to be just as gloomy, and whereas last year unemployed school leavers were down to 13,000 by October, this year at least 40,000 could still be without jobs at the end of the year. More pessimistic figures go as high as 100,000. For the first time the south of England has been badly hit. Most of the work force is concentrated in a line south of the Wash, but, in the past, most of the unemployment has been in the heavy industry areas north of that line (Wales counts as being north). This year there is more unemployment in the south. That is not yet the case for school leavers, though the trend is moving that way. It is still easier, on the whole, for a school leaver to get a job in the south than it is in the north.

Future prospects are extremely bleak. By January or February, all but a few thousand leavers are usually absorbed. There is every reason to think that this time there will be many more still out of work when next year's school leavers come on to the labour market. Most of them will be unqualified under-achievers.

In 1972, the situation was saved by recovery in the economy and, the following year, the raising of the school leaving age. Neither of those solutions will be available this time. There are many signs that much of the unemployment now is not due merely to a "shake-out" caused by the recession, but it is more "structural" - that is, permanent.

To help alleviate the situation the Government have allocated £ 50 million. This was part of a £ 175 m package to create 100,000 jobs, announced in late September in advance of the Labour Party Conference.

The principal measures are :

- £ 30m to local authorities for a job creation scheme, probably to be known as Community Enterprise. £ 20 m of it will be for school leavers.
- £ 25m for training schemes.
- £ 5m for £5 a week subsidy to employers for each new school leaver they take on.

Community Enterprise will enable local authorities to carry out socially desirable work - painting old people's homes and so on - for which there is no money in bad times and which is too expensive on labour costs in good times. At best, it will provide 15,000 jobs, two thirds of which will go to school leavers and, it is hoped, will contain some vocational training.

The £ 25m for training will be added to the £ 40m the Government have already handed out for training in the past six months. The one new initiative will be the creation of short industrial apprentice courses. These will not give a trade and will not guarantee a job, though it is hoped that the courses will make it easier to get one.

The £5 a week subsidy will last for six months. It compares with the £ 10 a week subsidy for keeping jobs going.

None of the measures is expected to be permanent.

The spectre of the dole queue is encouraging an unprecedented number of young adults to enrol for courses at Britain's 500 colleges of further education. National enrolments, when completed at the end of September, could well show an increase of more than 5 per cent if returns follow the trend shown in a sample survey by the Times Higher Educational Supplement in 10 areas of Britain.

Universities also appear to have had an exceptional year for admissions with several universities reporting increases of between 10 and 25 per cent.

331.3 - 053.7 (41-4) The Times Educational Supplement, 26/IX/1975 ; The Times Higher Education Supplement, 10/IX/1975 ; M.J.T.

UNITED KINGDOM : NO SCOPE FOR IMPROVEMENT

Because of the current financial situation the Department of Education and Science has given the following guidance, embodied in circular 70/75, to local education authorities.

The forecasts of the Department of Education and Science show a net increase in 1976/77 over the current year of some 23,000 pupils in the primary and secondary schools (a drop of 74,000 in primary pupils being more than offset by an increase of about 97,000 secondary pupils) and of about 20,000 full-time equivalent students attending further and higher education colleges. There will thus be no scope for improvement of standards for the education service at any level, and only by strict economy and careful planning will it be possible to obviate the need for reductions of standards.

In the schools the first priority for available resources should be for pupils within the compulsory age range ; for them the aim should be to maintain, but not to improve, existing staffing ratios. While some authorities will need to increase their teaching staffs for this purpose, those authorities with a falling population, mainly large urban areas, should reduce their teaching staff proportionately.

Much of the net increase in numbers will occur among pupils and students of 16-19 reflecting demographic trends. It is important in present circumstances that authorities should review the organisation and disposition of their provision for these age groups in schools and colleges to ensure that educational resources, including teachers, are most effectively deployed, and are not uneconomically dispersed among unduly small groups of pupils or students.

In the higher education sector, where capacity both of staff and of accommodation has in many instances outrun demand, additional students should be accommodated as far as possible within present resources, and firmer steps should be taken to tighten staffing ratios.

Those local education authorities which have recently allowed children to be admitted full-time to ordinary infant classes on reaching the age of four should review this policy in the interests of economy. Rising five's should not be admitted unless they make no additional call on educational resources and do not prevent the re-deployment of these resources for more essential purposes Younger children should be admitted, normally for part-time attendance, only within the capacity of purpose built or adapted nursery accommodation.

Steps to rationalise and concentrate resources in these ways should help the education service to make the best of a period when standards of material provision and upkeep of premises must remain below the level generally accepted as desirable in the recent past. Wherever numbers are falling, although expenditure cannot always be reduced exactly in step, every effort should be made to secure the consequential savings as early as possible.

There will be no scope for increased expenditure in real terms on the rest of the education service - including the youth, recreation and community services, expenditure on fees payable to independent and direct grant schools, maintenance allowances or other assistance to individual pupils - or in the libraries and museums service.

37.014.5 (41-4) Extract from DES circular 10/75 printed in "Education", 12/IX/1975 ; M.J.T.

UNITED KINGDOM : REORGANISATION OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION

Under the plans for reorganising higher education outside universities decisions have been reached concerning the future of 125 of the colleges of education for training teachers in England and Wales. Thirteen colleges are expected to disappear because they are small, or are situated in remote areas. Twenty-five are being joined with nineteen polytechnics and further mergers are being considered. Three colleges are to become constituent parts of universities, fifty will remain "free standing" and the future of thirty-four is still under consideration. Only eleven teacher training centres will have more than 1,000 students in 1981, the target date for the end of the reorganisation.

377.8 (41-4) The Times Educational Supplement, 3/X/1975 ; M.J.T.

UNITED KINGDOM : THE EDUCATION OF HANDICAPPED PUPILS

A more integrated system of mutual support in the education of handicapped children by teachers, parents, local authorities, social workers and psychologists is called for by the Association of Education Psychologists in its evidence to the Committee of Inquiry into Special Education, which has been set up by the Department of Education and Science. However such education is organised, says the Association, it will be most effective only if handicap is properly assessed at an early stage. Health visitors and social workers needed to be encouraged to refer cases for further opinion to doctors, teachers or educational psychologists, and not to regard this as a sign of personal inadequacy. Categories of handicap were in need of modification and greater flexibility. The Association stresses the importance of preventive measures in dealing with handicap, measures such as education for parenthood, free genetic counselling and ante- and post-natal teaching in the academic, emotional and social needs of children as well as in their physical care.

The Association wants decisions affecting the education of the handicapped child to be taken in full consultation with the parents. Local authorities should, it says, foster mutual support and self-help groups for parents, and the home-school relationship should be on a basis of equality, not sufferance. Where separate special schools exist they should be brought in touch with the community as much as possible "by siting near to and integrating with neighbourhood schools, by link courses and regular communication with further education institutions, by teacher exchange and in-service education and by the increase of returns from special to neighbourhood schools". The Association sees the ideal organisation as full comprehensive neighbourhood education with semi-protection for those in need of it.

In order to secure the most efficient use of equipment and materials, the Association suggests that local authorities should set up central pools of resources for use as required.

376.2 (41-4) Education, 5/IX/1975 ; M.J.T.

UNITED KINGDOM : UNIVERSITY RESEARCH

The House of Commons Select Committee on Science and Technology which has been examining the effects of inflation has concluded that university research has been sacrificed indiscriminately and arbitrarily to protect undergraduate teaching.

Among the short-term measures it recommends to help university research are that

- the Research Councils should actively review their priorities to ensure that maximum possible support and encouragement are given to those areas of research which they consider to be of greatest promise and to be in the national need ;
- the Department of Education and Science should not expect, and the universities should not accept, growth targets for student numbers which, unless there is a sudden improvement in the economic situation, could only be achieved at the expense of the universities' research activities ; and
- if real reductions in the level of university activity are considered necessary, they are accompanied by as strong a guarantee as possible that the reduced level of activity will be maintained,

378 : 001.891 (41-4) The Times Higher Education Supplement, 12/IX/1975 ; M.J.T.